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Aloe jacksonii updated

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In 2017 I published a short article on *Aloe jacksonii* in which I summarised its history and described the plant in cultivation (Walker, 2017). To recap, this species was named in 1955 by G.W. Reynolds for Major T.H.E. Jackson, who discovered it at El Kerré in the Ogaden Province of Ethiopia in 1943 whilst stationed there during the Second World War. Major Jackson wrote that “El Kerré is a strange rock outcrop with precipitous sides, and the station was built below the precipice. There is a steep path winding up a cleft, and the aloes were found along the edge at the top” (Reynolds, 1955). However, when Maurizio Dioli revisited El Kerré in 2000, he searched for *A. jacksonii* but was unable to locate it (Dioli & McCoy, 2007). Therefore at the time of my article the origin of *A. jacksonii* was uncertain and so I raised the questions: did it ever grow at El Kerré, has it died out from that location, or did Jackson incorrectly report its type locality? I can now report the answer.

The good news is that *A. jacksonii* has since been rediscovered in habitat but not at its apparent type locality of El Kerré (Štarha, 2020a,b). In 2020 Roman Štarha walked down from the Bur Caddas plateau which is part of the Gerire Hills mountain system in the Ogaden to El Kerré with its serpentine rocks. Roman observed that every turn in the path would more or less correspond to Jackson’s description and was of the opinion that Jackson, as a true collector, moved through a very large area of the mountains, not only on foot but probably also on horseback. Roman was able to discover *A. jacksonii* on the basis of his knowledge of the subsoil, altitude and old maps showing now defunct roads and settlements. He observed that the roads 80 years ago led in a different direction to those of current roads. Roman records that the ecotope (geographical extent) of *A. jacksonii* at Bur Caddas is relatively small, covers an area of

about 100 × 20 m and is relatively far from the access road. The density of plants was relatively high, the plants at the site were in flower but were relatively uniform. Roman records like Maurizio before him that *A. jacksonii* does not grow in the vicinity of El Kerré. He concludes that Jackson collected the plants at a specific locality but recorded it as growing next to the nearest existing village almost 80 years ago which then became its type locality where it does not, in fact, occur. However, this species is alive and thriving at Bur Caddas in the Gerire Hills, Ogaden Province, Ethiopia.

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